



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.3447 | FAX (517) 373.5849
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/birkholz/

For Immediate Release
June 15, 2005

Contact: Amanda Price
517-373-3447

Sen. Birkholz applauds restored funding for school bus inspections and arson investigators

LANSING – Sen. Patty Birkholz applauds her Senate colleagues for passing a revised State Police budget that would allow the continuation of state arson investigations and school bus inspections.

The Senate restored \$1.3 million to keep the Arson Investigation Unit operational which assists smaller and more rural areas investigate acts of arson.

“Our smaller townships don’t have the resources and funds to hire fire inspectors in the event of a suspected arson and it is very important to them to have this remain in the budget,” said Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township. “Without state assistance, many rural fires wouldn’t be investigated fully. I’m pleased we were able to save this program after the governor proposed eliminating it.”

Additionally, the budget retains funding for the School Bus Safety Inspection program, which the governor also proposed eliminating. The program ensures that every Michigan school bus, more than 17,000 last year alone, is inspected annually by the State Police’s expert maintenance crew.

“The safety of our children is extremely important and we cannot have the school buses our students ride in daily go uninspected,” Birkholz said. “When last year alone, more than 2,100 buses were deemed too unsafe to transport children in, it is obvious that retaining funding for this program is the right move. When children’s lives are at stake we cannot be playing games with safety inspection funding.”

The budget bill now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

###